

Lucas on the Osteology of the Spotted Tinamou. — These 'Notes' * point out briefly various osteological differences between the present species and some of its allies, as described and figured by Parker. Figures are given of the skull and pelvis. — J. A. A.

Shufeldt on Bird Skulls and *Sterna* collected by Dr. Streets.† — This report relates to the skulls and sterna of 13 species, mostly water-fowl. They include such various types as *Urinator*, *Daption*, *Pelecanoides*, *Cephus*, *Sula*, *Larus*, *Chlaephaga*, *Ardea*, *Nycticorax*, *Geococcyx*, and *Corvus*. The sternum of *Daption capensis*, with the shoulder girdle *in situ*, is figured; also the skulls of *Chlaephaga poliocephala*, *Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*, and *Corvus corax sinuatus*. — J. A. A.

Chamberlain's 'Systematic Table of Canadian Birds.' — We are in receipt of a second work by Mr. Montague Chamberlain on the birds of Canada. This, as the title‡ indicates, is a tabular list of the birds of Canada, as given in the same authors' 'Catalogue of Canadian birds.' The 'Systematic Table' is thus a 'check-list' and a 'table of higher groups' combined. The names of orders and suborders form subheadings, while the names of families, subfamilies, genera, subgenera, species, and subspecies, English names, and current numbers are arranged in parallel columns, each species or subspecies thus occupying a line running across the page. This arrangement requires a very broad page, but will doubtless subserve a useful purpose.

In the 'Introduction' to this work the author gives a condensed sketch of the history of American ornithology, particularly since 1859. He also notes the tendency to extreme conservatism respecting species and subspecies, etc., among Canadian naturalists as compared with those of the United States, a conservatism obviously resulting from a difference of attitude respecting the "evolution theory of the origin of species." This theory, Mr. Chamberlain says, while accepted by the greater part "of the scientific men of the United States . . . as an established fact, rather than a mere hypothesis," is considered "by Canadian students, as a rule, as 'not proven.'" This state of affairs seems to have suggested "that an association of Canadian ornithologists be organized, and that this society undertake the formulation of a system of classification and nomenclature which shall more truly reflect the ideas on the subject which are current in the Dominion." Mr. Chamberlain, while conceding that the formation of such an association might greatly promote the advancement of ornithol-

* Notes on the Osteology of the Spotted Tinamou (*Nothura maculosa*). By Frederic A. Lucas. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 1887, pp. 157, 158 (July 2, 1887).

† On a Collection of Birds' Sterna and Skulls, collected by Dr. Thomas H. Streets, U. S. Navy. By Dr. R. W. Shufeldt. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., pp. 376-387 (Sept. 27 to Nov. 3, 1887).

‡ A Systematic Table [of] Canadian Birds. [By] Montague Chamberlain. [Published for the Author.] St. John, N. B. [1888. Fol. pp. 14.

ogy in Canada, very promptly and effectually disposes of the rest of the scheme as impracticable and mischievous. He states, in very plain terms, that Canada has not at present the means for undertaking such a task, having neither ornithologists equipped with the requisite experience and technical knowledge of the subject, nor collections sufficiently large to serve as anything like an adequate basis for such work. He very rudely pricks the bubble of Canadian assumption by stating some very plain facts, namely: "If all the bird skins in the Dominion were combined they would not make a good working collection. In no one Museum in the country are the birds of even a small locality well represented. There are a few creditable private collections, but none of these contain a sufficient series of skins to show the variations in plumage of all the species—the variations of sex and age and seasons, to say nothing of individual and geographical variation." This is not said unkindly, nor with a view so much to expose the weakness of Canadian ornithological resources, as to arouse greater activity, and particularly to stimulate interest in ornithology and kindred sciences in Government circles, in connection with the present Canadian Geological Survey. While this Survey has done admirable work in many departments of science, and has earned an enviable reputation for the originality and thoroughness of its work, it has given little attention to zoölogy. This seems primarily due to an impression, rather generally entertained across the border, that the animals of Canada are already well-known. We trust that Mr. Chamberlain's plain statements, his appeals, and his example of energetic and intelligent activity in his favorite fields of ornithology and mammalogy, will arouse general interest and lead to fruitful results.—J. A. A.

Slater and Hudson's 'Argentine Ornithology.'*—A hand-book of the birds of any portion of South America is sure to meet a 'long-felt want,' and when undertaken by authors so well fitted for the task as in the present case is to be especially welcomed. Dr. Slater's long familiarity with 'Neotropical' birds renders him eminently qualified for the technical portion of the work; while Mr. Hudson's long residence in the Argentine Republic, and his unquestioned ability as an observer, imparts to the biographical part an equal trustworthiness. Rarely more than a page is devoted to a species, 229 species being treated in a space of 208 pages. Some of the more common or better known species are noticed by Mr. Hudson at considerable length, while in other cases there is little more than the technical description. Mr. Barrow's notes on the 'Birds of the Lower Uruguay,' published in this journal, 1883-84, are often quoted at length. References are given to the special literature of the subject. The technical

* *Argentine Ornithology.* | A | *Descriptive Catalogue* | of the | *Birds of the Argentine Republic.* | By | P. L. Slater, M. A., Ph.D., F. R. S., Etc. | With Notes on their Habits | by | W. H. Hudson, C. M. Z. S., | late of Buenos Ayres | [Vignette]. The Cariama. | — | Volume I. | — | London : | R. H. Porter, 6 Tenterden Street, W. | 1888. 8vo, pp. i-xv, 1-208, pll. col. i-x.